

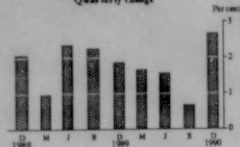
# Statistics Weekly

Thursday, 21 February 1991

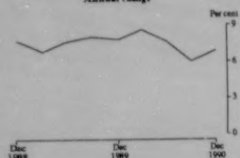
## *The week in statistics ...*

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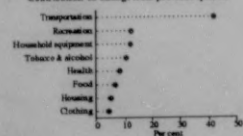
CONSUMER PRICE INDEX  
Quarterly change



Annual change



CONSUMER PRICE INDEX  
December quarter 1990  
Contribution to change from previous quarter



## Transportation the main cause of larger CPI increase

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) increased by 2.7 per cent between September and December quarters and by 6.9 per cent since December quarter 1989. Both figures are up on those for the September quarter of 0.7 per cent and 6.0 per cent respectively.

Increases in transportation prices accounted for 41.9 per cent of the December quarter rise. The transportation index increased by 6.7 per cent, due mainly to petrol price increases of 20.8 per cent. (Petrol prices, which are measured monthly for CPI purposes, rose sharply in August, September and October, before easing back in November and December.)

Four other groups contributed a further 42.6 per cent of the rise. Recreation and education rose by 3.1 per cent due to price increases in holiday travel and accommodation. Tobacco and alcohol (up 3.4%), household equipment and operation (up 1.8%) and health and personal care (up 3.6%) also made significant contributions to the increase.

Housing, with a rise of 0.8 per cent, had a moderating influence on the index, with rises in local government rates and charges being partially offset by the second consecutive fall in mortgage interest charges.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX, DECEMBER QUARTER 1990  
Weighted average of eight capital cities, percentage change

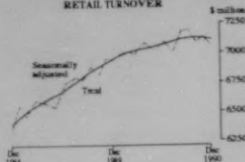
	From previous quarter	From corresponding quarter of previous year
Food	0.9	3.2
Clothing	1.7	4.5
Housing	0.8	5.1
Household equipment and operation	1.8	6.0
Transportation	6.7	12.2
Tobacco and alcohol	3.4	9.6
Health and personal care	3.6	10.5
Recreation and education	3.1	7.0
All groups	2.7	6.9
All groups excluding housing	3.0	7.2
All groups excluding food	3.1	7.8

For further information, order the publication Consumer Price Index (6401.0), or contact Maree Roy on (06) 252 6251.

## Negative trend in retail trade

Trend estimates of current price retail turnover for the last two months have fallen, the first time this has occurred since the trend series began in 1965. The series shows an average decrease of 0.1 per cent per month for the three months ended December 1990. Over the last twelve months the trend estimate has grown by only 2.4 per cent, compared with the 6.9 per cent growth in the Consumer Price Index over the same period.

RETAIL TURNOVER



The grocery industry is maintaining a moderate growth rate, averaging 0.6 per cent per month for the last three months and 0.7 per cent per month for the year to December 1990. Department stores and hotels, liquor stores and licensed clubs are in decline with average decreases of 0.1 and 0.5 per cent respectively for the three months ended December. Clothing and fabric stores are static with virtually no movement in the trend estimates over the last three months (see table below). Of the other industries, footwear stores are showing strong growth following a period of decline earlier in 1990, while the remainder are showing weak to moderate growth or are in decline.

RETAIL TURNOVER

	Original value in December 1990 \$ million	Percentage change in trend estimates	
		Average monthly increase for 3 months to December 1990	December 1990 over December 1989
Grocers etc	2,381	0.6	8.8
Hotels, liquor stores, licensed clubs	1,188	-0.5	2.9
Department and general stores	1,550	-0.1	2.6
Clothing and fabrics stores	748	0.0	0.9
Other industries	3,528	n.a.	n.a.
All industries	9,395	-0.1	2.4

On a State basis South Australia exhibited the strongest growth in the trend estimates of turnover with an average increase of just over 1 per cent for the three months to December. Growth in turnover for Queensland is moderate averaging 0.4 per cent for the last three months. The remaining States are in decline, none more so than Victoria where the trend estimates have shown a fall in each of the last eleven months.

For further information, order the publication *Retail Trade, Australia (8501.0)*, or contact Bill Powell on (06) 252 6132.

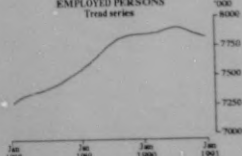
## Male full-time employment falls

A fall in the number of males employed full-time was the main component of the decrease in total employment in January 1991. The number of persons unemployed rose to its highest level since September 1983. Since that time however, total employment has risen by just over 1.5 million and, while the number of persons unemployed is similar, the present unemployment rate is markedly lower (8.4 per cent in January 1991 compared with 10.3 per cent in September 1983).

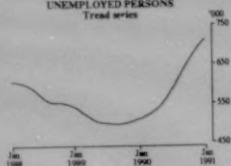
The seasonally adjusted estimate of employed persons fell to 7,822,900. Male full-time employment fell by 30,600 but this was offset by an increase of 10,500 in female full-time employment. Male part-time employment rose by 13,100 while female part-time employment fell by 22,500.

The January 1991 seasonally adjusted estimate of unemployed persons rose by 26,800 to 718,700. Male unemployment rose by 13,800 to 418,500 and female unemployment increased by 13,000 to 300,100. The main components were a rise of 16,300 in the number of males seeking full-time work and a rise of 17,700 in the number of females seeking part-time work.

*Continued ...*

EMPLOYED PERSONS  
Trend series

UNEMPLOYED PERSONS  
Trend series



The seasonally adjusted estimate of the unemployment rate for January 1991 was 8.4 per cent, a rise of 0.3 percentage points. The male unemployment rate increased by 0.3 percentage points to 8.4 per cent and for females the rate rose by 0.4 percentage points to 8.5 per cent.

Seasonally adjusted, the labour force participation rate was 63.8 per cent.

LABOUR FORCE ESTIMATES  
Seasonally adjusted

	Employed			Un- employed	Unemploy- ment rate	Partici- pation rate
	Full-time workers	Part-time workers	Total — '000 —			
1990 —						
October	6,178.7	1,689.9	7,868.6	630.0	7.6	63.9
November	6,153.1	1,673.0	7,826.1	698.1	8.2	63.8
December	6,176.8	1,675.6	7,852.4	691.9	8.1	63.9
1991 —						
January	6,156.8	1,666.2	7,822.9	718.7	8.4	63.8

For further information, order the publication *The Labour Force, Australia*, Preliminary (6202.0), or contact Don Clark (06) 252 6525.

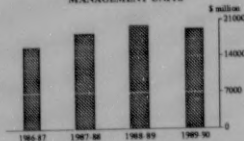
## Down turn in the rural sector

First estimates from the latest Agricultural Finance Survey showed that the turnover of farming management units decreased by 3 per cent from \$20,272 million in 1988-89 to \$19,586 million in 1989-90.

Sheep, sheep-cereal grains, cereal grains and poultry industries were the most affected. Vegetables was one of the few industries to show significant growth.

Of the three main components of turnover, sales from crops showed a marginal increase, sales from livestock showed a 5 per cent decrease and sales from livestock products showed 7 per cent decrease.

TURNOVER OF AGRICULTURAL  
MANAGEMENT UNITS



TURNOVER OF AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT UNITS

Industry	1988-89	1989-90	Percentage change
	\$ million	\$ million	
Cereal grains	1,550	1,210	-21.9
Poultry	465	364	-21.7
Sheep	4,161	3,572	-14.2
Sheep-cereal grains	4,164	3,713	-10.8
Meat cattle-cereal grains	523	489	-6.5
Fruit	1,106	1,098	-0.7
Meat cattle	1,963	2,042	4.0
Pigs	366	388	6.0
Milk cattle	1,733	1,838	6.1
Sheep-meat cattle	1,531	1,640	7.1
Sugar	763	818	7.2
Vegetables	937	1,056	12.7
Other agriculture	1,011	1,355	34.0
All industries	20,272	19,586	-3.4

Value added decreased by 21 per cent from \$11,690 million in 1988-89 to \$9,261 million in 1989-90.

At the same time, gross indebtedness decreased by 4 per cent from \$12,948 million in 1988-89 to \$12,470 million in 1989-90.

More detailed results of the survey will be published later in 1991.

For further information, order the publication *Agricultural Industries Financial Statistics, Australia, 1989-90, First Preliminary Estimates (7509.0)*, or contact Frank McCallum on (008) 030 084.

## Road freight statistics improved following coverage survey

The Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates of interstate road freight movements are now based on a survey of operators accounting for some 84 per cent of the total freight moved.

The improved quality of the estimates began with the September quarter 1990 statistics, released on 18 February, 1991. It follows a full-scale coverage survey of the interstate road freight industry for the 1989-90 financial year.

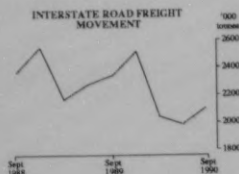
The survey has revealed significant concentration of activity in the industry over the last decade. In the 1980-81 census of interstate road freight, 70 per cent of all freight was moved by operators carrying more than 20,000 tonnes per year. In 1989-90 that figure had risen to 84 per cent. All 160 operators who carry more than 20,000 tonnes annually are now included in the quarterly survey.

Since the expanded survey only commenced in the September quarter, the movements shown in the table below are based on the old coverage in order to provide a basis for comparison.

INTERSTATE ROAD FREIGHT MOVEMENT, SEPTEMBER QUARTER 1990

	Road freight originating		Road freight received	
	'000 tonnes	Percentage change on previous quarter	'000 tonnes	Percentage change on previous quarter
Sydney	507	7.8	492	5.5
Melbourne	539	5.4	567	0.9
Brisbane	193	4.2	283	11.2
Adelaide	228	16.6	240	8.2
Perth	48	8.2	62	10.0
Canberra	26	11.8	84	-1.5
Other	563	1.4	376	10.9
Total	2,104	6.1	2,104	6.1

For further information, order the publication *Interstate Road Freight Movement, Australia (9214.0)*, or contact Choon Looi on (06) 252 5458.



## Inquiries

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### Suggestions

Any suggestions for improvement to this publication should be addressed to:

Robert Nixon  
Editor  
*Statistics Weekly*  
(06) 252 6104

## All the week's releases: 13 to 19 February

### General

Monthly Summary of Statistics, Aust., February 1991 (1304.0; \$19.00)  
Statistics Weekly, 14 February 1991 (1318.0; \$4.00)  
Economic Indicators, Qld, February 1991 (1307.3; \$6.00)  
Territory Business Indicators, February 1991 (1307.7; \$4.00)

### Demography

Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., July 1990 (3401.0; \$5.00)  
Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Aust., August 1990 (3401.0; \$5.00)

### National accounts, finance and foreign trade

Imports, Aust., Monthly Summary Tables, December 1990 (5433.0; \$9.00)  
Assets of Superannuation Funds and Approved Deposit Funds, September Qtr 1990 (5656.0; \$10.00)

### Labour statistics and prices

The Labour Force, Aust., January 1991, Preliminary (6202.0; \$10.00)  
Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Aust., September Qtr 1990 (6248.0; \$14.50)  
The Labour Force, Aust. — Preliminary Data on Floppy Disk, January 1991 (6271.0; \$65.00)  
Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Aust., December 1990 (6312.0; \$10.00)  
Consumer Price Index, December Qtr 1990 (6401.0; \$11.00)  
Price Indexes of Copper Materials, Aust., January 1991 (6410.0; \$5.00)  
Price Indexes of Materials Used in Coal Mining, Aust., December 1990 (6415.0; \$10.00)

### Agriculture

Livestock Products — Meat, Qld, December 1990 (7204.3; \$4.50)  
Livestock and Livestock Products, SA, 1989-90 (7221.4; \$15.00)

### Secondary industry and distribution

Manufacturing Industry: Details of Operations, Aust., 1988-89 (8203.0; \$15.00)  
Manufacturing Production, Aust.: Food, Drink, Tobacco, Stock and Poultry Food, November 1990 (8359.0; \$10.00)  
Manufacturing Production, Aust. Energy Products, December 1990 (8368.0; \$4.50)  
Retail Trade, Aust., December 1990 (8501.0; \$10.00)  
Building Activity, Qld, September Qtr 1990 (8752.3; \$10.00)  
Building Approvals — Private Sector, Perth Statistical Division, January 1991 (8732.5; \$3.50)  
Tourist Accommodation, Tas., September Qtr 1990 (8635.6; \$8.50)  
Building Approvals, Tas., December 1990 (8731.6; \$8.50)

### Transport

Interstate Road Freight Movement, Aust., September Qtr 1990 (9214.0; \$5.00)  
Motor Vehicle Registrations, Aust., November 1990 (9303.0; \$10.00)

## Calendar of key releases

Expected releases over the fortnight to 5 March 1991

### February

- 21** Price Index of Materials Used in Building Other Than House Building, Eight Capital Cities, December 1990 (6407.0; \$10.00)
- 22** Housing Finance for Owner Occupation, Australia, December 1990 (5609.0; \$10.00)
- Export Price Index, Australia, December 1990 (6405.0; \$7.50)
- 26** Price Index of Materials Used in House Building, Six State Capital Cities and Canberra, December 1990 (6408.0; \$7.50)
- Manufacturing Production, Australia, January 1991, Preliminary (8301.0; \$10.00)
- 27** Stocks, Manufacturers' Sales, December Quarter 1990 and Expected Sales to December 1991, Australia (5629.0; \$10.00)
- Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries, Australia, December 1990 (6411.0; \$10.00)
- 28** Foreign Investment, Australia, December Quarter 1990, Preliminary (5307.0; \$10.00)
- Average Weekly Earnings, Australia, November 1990, Preliminary (6301.0; \$3.50)
- Price Indexes of Articles Produced by Manufacturing Industry, Australia, December 1990 (6412.0; \$10.00)
- Registrations of New Motor Vehicles, Australia, January 1991, Preliminary (9301.0; \$10.00)

### March

- 4** Building Approvals, Australia, January 1990 (8731.0; \$12.50)
- 5** Company Profits, Australia, December 1990 (5651.0; \$10.00)

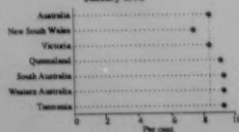
## The latest ...

Changes to key State indicators — consolidated to  
19 February 1991

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust.
— Percentage change from same period previous year —									
New capital expenditure (Sept. qtr 90)*	-0.9	-10.9	5.4	11.2	-17.9	37.2	n.a.	n.a.	-3.4
Retail turnover (Dec. 90) (trend estimate)	3.6	-3.2	4.4	8.8	2.1	4.8	n.a.	7.6	2.4
New motor vehicle registrations (Dec. 90)†	-0.8	-36.9	7.8	1.3	-12.8	13.6	-10.6	3.2	-10.6
Number of dwelling unit approvals (Dec. 90)	4.0	-32.7	-12.0	-2.4	-27.5	32.5	4.6	72.5	-12.1
Value of total building work done (Sept. qtr 90)	-7.2	-7.7	-14.0	-6.3	-25.8	-18.8	-1.0	-9.0	-10.6
Employed persons (January 91)*	0.6	-2.4	-0.6	0.3	0.7	1.2	-10.1	2.8	-0.5
Capital city consumer price index (Dec. qtr 90)	6.4	7.4	6.2	7.8	7.4	6.1	7.1	6.8	6.9
Average weekly earnings (full-time adult ordinary time) (August 90)	5.4	7.0	6.9	7.3	7.9	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.4
Population (June 90)	1.0	1.4	2.6	1.0	2.5	1.2	0.6	2.3	1.5
Room nights in licensed hotels and motels, etc (June qtr 90)	5.4	-0.9	5.7	5.5	-4.1	-1.2	8.5	14.8	3.6

\* Seasonally adjusted except for NT and ACT. † Seasonally adjusted except for Tas., NT and ACT.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE  
Seasonally adjusted  
January 1991



## Key national indicators - consolidated to 12 February 1991

			Latest figure available		Percentage change (a) on		
			Original	Seasonally adjusted	Previous period	Corresponding period last year	
Period							
<b>National production</b>							
Gross domestic product	— current prices	\$m	Sept. qtr 90	93,635	43,427	-0.8	3.6
	— 1984-85 prices			63,152	63,670	-1.6	-0.7
<b>Industrial activity</b>							
New capital expenditure	— current prices	\$m	Sept. qtr 90	7,078	7,397	6.7	-3.4
	— 1984-85 prices			5,349	5,600	6.0	-5.7
Expected new capital expenditure		"	Three months to Dec. 90	8,311	n.a.	n.a.	-5.7
Retail turnover	— current prices	"	December 90	9,395	7,065	-0.9	1.8
	— 1984-85 prices	"	Sept. qtr 90	14,213	14,858	0.4	0.4
New motor vehicle registrations (e)		no.	December 90	42,204	43,607	-7.1	-10.6
Dwelling unit approvals		"	December 90	8,438	9,798	-10.9	-12.1
Value of all building approvals		\$m	"	1,371	1,497	-21.3	-16.5
Value of total building work done		"	Sept. qtr 90	7,214	6,951	-3.7	-10.6
	— current prices	"	"	4,556	4,390	-4.2	-14.4
	— 1984-85 prices	"	Sept. qtr 90	35,796	34,854	1.3	-0.9
Manufacturers' sales		"	Three months to Dec. 90	37,757	n.a.	n.a.	0.3
Expected manufacturers' sales		"					
<b>Labour</b>							
Employed persons		'000	January 91	7,668.8	7,822.9	-0.4	-0.5
Unemployment rate †	%	"	"	9.1	8.4	0.3	2.3
Participation rate †	%	"	"	63.0	63.8	-0.1	0.3
Job vacancies		'000	November 90	34.1	35.4	-27.8	-45.6
Average weekly overtime per employee	hours	"	"	1.3	1.3	-1.9	-16.2
<b>Prices, profits and wages</b>							
Consumer price index	1980-81 = 100.0	Dec. qtr 90	214.5	n.a.	2.7	6.9	
Price index of materials used in manufacturing industries	1984-85 = 100.0	November 90	133.7	n.a.	-0.3	13.3	
Price index of articles produced by manufacturing industry	1988-89 = 100.0	November 90	113.5	n.a.	1.1	7.2	
Company profits before income tax	\$m	Sept. qtr 90	3,449	3,337	-4.2	-23.2	
Average weekly earnings (Full-time adults; ordinary time)	\$	August 90	541.00	n.a.	1.3	6.4	
<b>Interest rates (b) (monthly average)</b>							
90-day bank bills †	% per annum	December 90	12.05	n.a.	-4.40	-5.75	
10-year Treasury bonds †	"	"	12.05	n.a.	-0.20	-0.85	
<b>Balance of payments</b>							
Exports of merchandise	\$m	December 90	4,317	4,104	-6.8	10.2	
Imports of merchandise	"	"	3,963	4,344	-1.9	8.4	
Balance on merchandise trade (c)	"	"	354	240	n.a.	15.8	
Balance of goods and services (c)	"	"	158	561	n.a.	15.8	
Balance on current account (c)	"	"	-1,069	-1,775	-30.2	5.8	
Terms of trade (d)	1984-85 = 100.0	Sept. qtr 90	n.a.	105.3	0.3	-1.8	
<b>Foreign investment</b>							
Net foreign debt	\$m	30 Sept. 90	124,507	n.a.	1.4	7.3	
Net foreign liabilities	"	"	165,572	n.a.	3.3	7.4	
<b>Exchange rates (monthly average)</b>							
US\$	per \$A	December 90	0.7699	n.a.	-0.6	-2.1	
Trade weighted index	May 1970 = 100.0	"	56.7	n.a.	0.9	-7.1	
<b>Other indicators</b>							
Population (resident at end of qtr)	million	June 90	17.1	n.a.	0.3	1.5	
Overseas visitor arrivals	'000	August 90	178	197	0.1	11.1	

(a) Based on seasonally adjusted figures where available. (b) Source: Reserve Bank of Australia. (c) For percentage changes, a minus sign indicates an increase in the deficit; no sign means a decrease in the deficit or an increase in the surplus. (d) The ratio of the price of goods and services for exports to that for imports. (e) Later figures expected to be released Thursday, 21 February 1991.  
 NOTES: † = change is shown in terms of percentage points. n.a. = not available.  
 Figures have been taken from a variety of ABS publications. Copies may be obtained from Information Services (see page 6).  
 Some of the figures shown are preliminary, some final, and some are revisions of previously published figures. Users should check the latest relevant publication or with the ABS Information Services if the status of the statistic is important.

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